



Michigan Supreme Court

State Court Administrative Office

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Date: January 24, 2007

To: Trial Courts

From: Mark Dobek

Re: Update on Next Generation of Trial Court Case Management System

I would like to take this opportunity to update you on activities that have been taking place with respect to the Next Generation of the Trial Court Case Management System.

Next Generation Case Management System

The current JIS trial court case management system now supports the operations of nearly 70% of Michigan's trial courts. There are a number of courts waiting to be implemented. As the primary provider of case management systems in the state, it is imperative that the JIS system not only serve trial courts now, but also well into the future. The current versions of the four JIS systems are written in a 30-year old programming language and reside on hardware that is maintained by the individual courts. These systems have assisted the courts for many years but do not take full advantage of modern technology, including the power of the internet. Internet technology would allow JIS to design and support a system that is centrally hosted but can be distributed to users throughout the state, as well as provide users with enhanced business capabilities and reporting tools.

In 2005, the judiciary started to investigate strategies for updating the current versions of the JIS trial court systems. Two viable options were identified. The first option was to partner with a vendor to build a new system specifically designed for Michigan courts. The second option involved purchasing a commercial case management system and modifying it to meet Michigan's requirements. Under the second option, the only product that met JIS' technical requirements is a product from Tyler Technologies called Odyssey.

JIS and Trial Court Services spent much of 2006 thoroughly investigating both options. In August, a formal evaluation team was created to include trial court judges, administrators, and technical staff. During late September and early October, the evaluation team attended proposals and demonstrations by four vendors. Unisys, IBM, and Compuware each presented a proposal for building a new case management system. These companies were chosen because they each

had some demonstrated background with courts. Tyler Technologies spent three days demonstrating their Odyssey system's capabilities to the team.

Over 30 people participated in the various presentations and provided JIS with feedback illustrated below:

	Compu-ware	Unisys	IBM	Tyler	Comments
Trial Court 1		X			
Trial Court 2					No clear choice
Trial Court 3		X			
Trial Court 4		X			
Trial Court 5					
Trial Court 6			X		
Trial Court 7		X			
Trial Court 8				X	
Trial Court 9		X			
SCAO/JIS (8 total) (6 Unisys, 2 Compuware)		X			
SCAO/TCS/Regional Office (3 evaluations - 2 Unisys, 1 Tyler)		X			
SUMMARY		7	1	1	

Unisys presented SCAO with a unique solution and received an almost unanimous vote. They will use an established court case management framework that they developed for Australian courts. This framework will serve as the foundation upon which a custom system will be built for Michigan courts. The judiciary will own the end product. The evaluation team, including members of JIS and Trial Court Services, feels that Unisys brings the most extensive case management expertise to the project. The decision was made to partner with Unisys.

The initial contract with Unisys will be a 90-day Requirements Analysis Phase to document current system requirements and functional enhancements so that a detailed project strategy can be implemented. This work will be done over the course of 3 months for a fixed price. This phase is scheduled to begin the first week in February and wrap up in April. Upon successful completion of this phase, we should have a good idea of the timeframe needed to complete the project. The next phase will begin the actual development of the system.

The State Court Administrative Office is working to secure funding for the project from three sources: Increased user fees and JIS court implementations, Judicial Technology Improvement Fund resources reallocated from the Judicial Data Warehouse (JDW) and eFiling initiatives, and potential partnerships with trial courts who wish to invest in the development. SCAO is currently talking to several trial courts who have indicated an interest in piloting the new system.

In 2007, JIS and Trial Court Services will be devoting a great deal of time and energy to designing and building the Next Generation case management system. JIS will continue its commitment to providing outstanding service and support to the trial courts that currently use JIS systems. We have been told repeatedly that this is valued by our customers and sets us apart from other vendors. However, our staff, including our trial court representatives, will be heavily involved in the design and building of the new system. During the first 3-month requirements phase, staff will be meeting with Unisys to assist with the initial design of the system. This could impact our ability to immediately respond to support calls. We therefore ask for your patience during these coming months. Please pass this information on to those in your court who do have contact with JIS so they will understand the reason for any delay they might experience.

We will be updating you on the Next Generation project on a regular basis via memos and, eventually, a project website.

Very truly yours,

Marcus Dobek